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Brit. Assoc.—Report of the fifty-fourth meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Montreal, Aug. and Sept., 1884. London, 1885.

Packard, A. S.—On the embryology of *Limulus polyphemus*. Read before Amer. Philos. Soc., Jan. 16, 1885.

—Types of Carboniferous Xiphosura new to North America. Amer. Nat., 1885. Both from the author.

Geol. Surv. Canada.—Report of progress of the Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada, with maps, 1882–3–4. From A. R. C. Selwyn, director.

Macoun, J.—Catalogue of Canadian plants. Part II, Gamopetalæ. Geol. and Nat. Hist. Surv. Canada, 1884. From the author.

Agassiz, A.—On the young stages of some osseous fishes. Parts I and III. From Proc. Amer. Acad. Arts and Sciences, 1877 and 1882.

The development of *Lepidosteus*. Ext. idem., Oct., 1878. Both from the author.

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GENERAL NOTES.

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.¹

ASIA.—*The Badghis district.*—This district in Northern Afghanistan, north of the watershed of the Herat valley, consists of hills and valleys of sandstone clay, the hills rising from 200 to 600 feet, or even to 1000 feet, between two great streams. Though sand-covered and desert-looking in autumn, they are not only cultivable on their lesser slopes but exceedingly fertile, and in spring are covered with flowers and grass knee-deep. The northern and western parts have little running water, but the eastern and southern portions, along the Parapomus and the Kushk rivers, are exceptionally fertile. Sir Hy. Rawlinson states that the Bundelesh, a work compiled before the Arab conquest (in the fourth or fifth century) derives "Badghis" from the tribe of the Vad-Keshan or "wind-worshippers." Coins of the Kushan or Tokhari show that these tribes did worship the wind. They were commonly called "White Huns," came into the land in the fourth or fifth century, and had for their capital, Talikan, thirty or forty miles east of Maruchak. Badghis (Kileh-Maur) was their strong place.

The Pescadores.—The Pescadores, recently bombarded and occupied by Admiral Courbet, are in the Formosa channel, about twenty-five miles from Formosa. The largest is Panghu, and the Chinese name for the group is Panghuting or the Panghu district. Panghu is forty-eight miles in circumference, and the next in size, Fisher's or West island, is seventeen. The population of the two larger islands was given by Admiral Collinson, in 1845, as 5000, that of all the islands, 8000. There are twenty-one inhabited islands besides several rocks. Trees are

¹ This department is edited by W. N. LOCKINGTON, Philadelphia.

wanting, millet and the ground-nut are grown, and in the sheltered spots the sweet potato, but the natives depend mainly on Formosa for vegetables and fruits. The islands offer shelter in all states of the weather in the dangerous Formosa channel.

Port Hamilton.—Port Hamilton was stated, by *Nature*, to be identical with the large Korean island of Quelpart, about sixty miles due south of the extreme point of Corea. It is 150 miles from Shanghai and 100 from Nagasaki, and lies in the mouth of the only exit to the south from the Sea of Japan. It is an oval rock-bound island covered with innumerable conical mountains, often topped by abrupt volcanic craters, the highest of which, Haura, or Mt. Auckland, is 6500 feet high, and bears at its summit three craters, within each of which is a lake of pure water. Korean children are taught to believe that the three first-created men still dwell in these lofty heights. The island is well cultivated, and contains three walled cities and several towns, but has no good harbors. It has long been a place of banishment for criminals. The chief manufacture is that of straw hats, which are the best in Corea. Iron appears to abound on the southern coast.

Nature and other English papers were, however, mistaken in the statement that the large island of Quelpart is identical with Port Hamilton, which is marked upon German maps as situated somewhat to the north of Quelpart, and is formed by three rocky and elevated islets.

Asiatic Notes.—The name Pamir applies generally to the whole region lying at the sources of the Amu-daria. The word is derived from *bam*, roof, and perhaps the Kirghiz *ir*, earth. It extends in the shape of a horse-shoe from north to south 200 miles, and from east to west 170 miles. This area of 67,000 square versts has been surveyed on a scale of five versts to the inch. On the north and south its limits are well marked by the Alai and Hindu-Kush ranges respectively, while its eastern boundary is clearly defined by the Kashgarian mountains.—The Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society admit the error in the identification of Port Hamilton with Quelpart. Port Hamilton is thirty-eight miles N. N. E. of Quelpart, and is sheltered by three islands, the largest of which, Sodo, is three and a half miles long and 650 feet high at its highest spot. Sanhodo is about half as large and 783 feet high.—Peng Yang, the second most important city in Corea, is more a commercial than a manufacturing center, and is the capital of the province of Puing-an-do. It is more than 200 miles from Söul. Song-to, three days march from Söul, has walls as large as those of the capital, but the town has so dwindled that there is much cultivated land inside.—The Kara-kum, according to M. Lessar, is the region bounded by the Ust Urt, Khiva, Bokhara, Afghan

Turkistan, Attok and Akhal. Though the name signifies a sand desert it is not sandy throughout. The sands are of three kinds. The first is clayey, mixed with sand and covered with small hillocks and brushwood; the second kind consists of real sands which do not drift to any great extent, the drifting portion forming ridges or hillocks; but the third kind, the true *barkhans* or shifting-sand deserts, are without so much as a visible grass blade. Beside these different kinds of sands there are, in the Kara-kum, *kyrs* or tracts of firm clayey surfaces (mixed with sand) consisting of valleys alternating with eminences 140 to 210 feet high; *takirs*, or flat clayey areas surrounded by sands; and *shors* or tracts of hard ferruginous sand lying in the lowest parts of the desert.—The *Izvestia* gives an account of M. Potanin's journey from Peking to Lang-tcheou, in 1884. The country between the Yellow river and Boro-balgasun is covered with sand, rarely moving sand, but *barkhans* fortified by a growth of *shiabyk*, a species of *Artemisia*, with bushes of *Cavagana* in the cavities between. Water is plentiful. The dry grounds between the sands are covered with steppe vegetation, and sarrazin, millet and hemp are grown there. The Ordos inhabit this region. Boro-balgasun was once a town but now contains but a few huts within its ruined walls. At Edjin-khoro, on the Tchambkhak river, are two tents in which the bones of Zenghis Khan are said to be preserved. After leaving Boro-balgasun, the expedition visited the salt lake Baga-shikyr, and passed over an almost uninhabited region with ruins of Mussulman villages destroyed when the last insurrection was put down. Lin-tcheou, on the Hoang-ho, is surrounded by fruit gardens, and for fifty miles south of it numerous villages extend along a canal which runs parallel to the Hoang-ho. This richness is of recent origin, for the whole region bears traces of the desolation wrought by the Chinese after the suppression of the insurrection, of which the town of Tsin-tsi-pou was the center. South of this town M. Potanin left the Hoang-ho and crossed the series of flat ridges which rise from 6000 to 7000 feet above the sea, and are covered with loess to a thickness of 200 to 300 feet. The sandstone of these hills contains some beds of salt. The loess covers the whole country from Ping-yang-sia to Lang-tcheou, which is a great city, picturesquely built on the right bank of the Hoang-ho at the foot of a mountain. The population is of Turk origin, and though it has assumed Chinese customs, it keeps its Mussulman religion.

AFRICA.—The route from Benguela to the mission village of Bihé has been approximately surveyed by the Rev. William E. Fay. The sketch maps, contributed to the *Missionary Herald*, cover an area sixty miles wide, extending over four degrees of longitude. The first human habitations met with are at the eastern foot of the coast range. About 100 miles from the coast the Ballombo river is spanned in wet seasons by a native

bridge, whose builders take toll. The mission village lies in about 16° E. long., and $12^{\circ} 15'$ S. lat., in a broad and beautiful valley, densely populated, and lying east of a region of mountains estimated to have peaks from five to eight thousand feet high. —The death of King Mtesa is confirmed, but it is believed that his son will prove more friendly to civilization than the father. Mirambo is also dead. —The Royal Geographical Society has decided to send out another expedition under Mr. J. T. Last, who will proceed to the confluence of the Rovuma and Lujendi rivers, fix the longitude of the junction, and will then establish himself awhile at the Namuli hills. After a study of this region, Mr. Last will enter the valley of the Likugu, follow it to the coast, and then follow the coast to Quillimane or Angoche. —The Portuguese possess a tract of land on the northern bank of the Congo, extending from Cape Lembo, south of Kabinda bay, to Massabé, and extending inland thirty or forty miles so as to contain Kabinda, Molembó, Landana and Massabé. The whole of the valley of the Kwilu, where the International Association had eighteen stations, is ceded to France. —Parts of the countries of Useguha, Nguru, Usagara and Ukami have, by treaty with "ten independent sultans," been brought under the protection of Germany. The commercial importance of this district is great, since the central trade route to Lake Tanganyika passes through it. After fifty to eighty miles of unhealthy coast region is passed, mountains and plains with much fertile country and sufficient water are reached. The Wa-ngaru, Wa-sagara and Wa-seguha speak nearly the same dialect. The King of the Belgians has resolved to abandon Karema and other stations of the association east of Lake Tanganyika. —The territory now claimed by Germany in East Africa is usually supposed to recognize the authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The rule of this potentate is acknowledged along trade routes for at least 700 miles in the interior, and also by many chiefs away from these routes. The sultan owns 1050 miles of coast besides islands. —In spite of the succession of misfortunes which beset M. Giraud, he has added greatly to our knowledge of Lake Bangweolo. The Luapula leaves the southwest corner of the lake, as shown on Mr. Ravenstein's map. —Capt. G. A. Chaddock has ascended the Limpopo for a considerable distance. The channel at the bar is narrow, with no less than four and a half fathoms of water. A long sandspit, three miles from the coast, forms a natural breakwater, and the water at the opening is fresh. The river channel is narrow and deep, the surrounding country low and level, and thickly populated. The lower course has no trees save some mangoes at the mouth. Captain Chaddock believes that the Limpopo is free from falls or any obstruction as far as the Transvaal.

AMERICA.—M. Chaffanjon, during an investigation of the hy-

drography of the Orinoco, not only obtained materials for a geological map of the region, but in five different places discovered inscriptions and pictures in granite, made by the natives. These he has carefully copied.—A party commanded by Feilberg, and sent out by the Argentine Confederation to explore the Pilcomayo, found that a trade route via that river to Bolivia is not feasible. Below the rapids, sixty leagues above the mouth, the Pilcomayo receives an affluent not marked on any chart, but with as much water as the Pilcomayo or perhaps even more. It was obstructed by sunken trees. The country along these rivers is rich with fine pasturage.—From Dr. Bell's report of the geological work of the Hudson Bay expedition, it appears that the highest land of the Labrador peninsula is everywhere close to the coast, with a gradual slope westward to the basins of the Koksoak and the rivers emptying into Hudson bay. The formation throughout Northern Labrador and the strait is gneiss, mostly Huronian, but some of it Laurentian.—Punta Arenas, the Chilian settlement in Magellan strait, is a town of 4000 inhabitants, surrounded by splendid lands with abundant pastures, forests and waters. A hill protects the town from the cold winds. The climate is said to be excellent.

GEOGRAPHICAL NEWS.—The fifth and sixth issues of Petermann's *Mittheilungen* for this year contain an account of Caffraria and the eastern districts of Cape Colony, by H. C. Schunke, with a map (in No. 5) upon a scale of 1 : 750,000. No 5 contains also some remarks upon the health-relations of the region of the Upper Amu Darja, by A. Regel; and an account of the German Geographical Congress held at Hamburg on April 9 to 11, 1885. On this occasion Doctors Steiner and Claus gave an account of their journey down the Xingu, and Dr. Boas a sketch of the Eskimo of Baffin's bay. No. 6 contains a map of the Panama canal on a scale of 1 : 120,000; an account of the German settlements on the Slave coast, by P. Langhans, and a history of ten journeys in Costa Rica, undertaken by the now expelled bishop, Dr. Theil. The coast line of the German possessions on the Slave coast is short, extending only from 1° 15' W. to 1° 34' W. Lome, Bugida and Porto Seguro are situated upon the shore, behind which is a lagoon, the Togo sea, at the mouth of the Raho river. The outlet of this lagoon is at Little Popo, to the east of the Togo territory. Popo is not claimed as German upon the map.

GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

THE RELATIONS OF THE PALÆOZOIC INSECTS.—At the April, 1885, meeting of the National Academy of Sciences, Mr. S. H. Scudder presented some important views as to the position of the insects of the Palæozoic age in the system. We make the following extracts from his paper:

The modification I would introduce is to this effect: That